Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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The role of nuclear weapons in security and defence doctrines

Working paper submitted by Egypt

1. Despite persistent calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their legal commitments of nuclear disarmament, the continued lack of concrete progress in the implementation of their obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains disappointing. We express our deep concern at the continued lack of meaningful progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

2. We observe with grave concern that nuclear deterrence continues to feature highly in the defence and security doctrines of nuclear-weapon States. The continuous efforts to pursue programmes to modernize stockpiles of nuclear weapons are yet another indication of the long-term reliance on this doctrine and weaken the commitment to the principles and objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

3. The continued possession by nuclear-weapon States of nuclear arsenals for deterrence purposes, the development of new generations of such weapons and the provision of assistance to States that are not parties to the Treaty, as well as the continued deployment of nuclear weapons in territories of non-nuclear-weapon States through nuclear-sharing arrangements, undermine the objectives of the Treaty.

4. Egypt recalls action 5 (c) of the final document adopted by 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in which, inter alia, the nuclear-weapon States were called upon to "further diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies". It is in this context that the implementation of the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals requires declaratory measures aimed at further strengthening transparency and predictability.

5. The notion put forward of "strategic stability" achieved through nuclear deterrence contradicts both the text and the spirit of the Treaty. Security and defence doctrines aimed at integrating nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes do not contribute to bringing regional and international stability and delay any possibility of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We remain deeply concerned at the

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reliance of some States and alliances on defence and security concepts and doctrines that justify the threat of use of nuclear weapons. Such doctrines confirm the continued reliance on nuclear weapons as an integral part of national security, thereby undermining both the text and the spirit of the Treaty.

6. Existing disparities in strategies, doctrines and operational status do not create favourable conditions for either achieving the elimination of nuclear weapons or promoting confidence-building measures. The reliance on nuclear weapons in security and defence strategies serves as evidence of the tendency to maintain the status quo and the discriminatory nature of the disarmament regime.

7. Recent reviews of nuclear postures by certain States have been both disappointing and alarming. They not only reflect a continued strong reliance on nuclear deterrence but even reveal future plans for the modernization of nuclear arsenals.

8. The 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should call for the reliance on nuclear weapons to be diminished and further highlight the centrality of collective security through reducing the reliance on nuclear weapons in security and defence doctrines and strategies.

Actions required by the 2020 Review Conference

1. Call upon the nuclear-weapon States to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.

2. Call upon the nuclear-weapon States to commit to accelerating concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, peace and undiminished and increased security.

3. Affirm the urgency of rapidly moving towards an overall reduction in the global stockpile of all types of nuclear weapons.

4. Consider the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States in further reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security.